

Lesson Nineteen

Vocabulary Sketch

1. **mellifluous** (mə li' flōō wəs) *adj.* having a rich, smoothly flowing sound
The singer's *mellifluous* voice contributed to the relaxed atmosphere of the lounge.
syn: harmonious *ant: strident; discordant*

2. **epicurean** (e pi kyū' rē ən) *adj.* taking pleasure in food and drink
The *epicurean* chef taught his students not only how to cook food, but also how to enjoy it.
syn: hedonistic; gourmet

3. **oeuvre** (ē' vrə or ōō vrə) *n.* the complete work of an artist, composer, or writer
Shakespeare's *oeuvre* is one of the most respected groups of literary works ever written.
syn: canon

4. **arbiter** (är' bə tər) *n.* a person with the ability to resolve a disagreement; a judge
The principal ended the conflict by acting as an *arbiter* between the two angry students.

5. **verdant** (vər' dənt) *adj.* fresh and green, referring to plant life
The *verdant* landscape reminded the O'Connells of their native Ireland so much that they decided to build a home there.
syn: lush *ant: arid; sere*

6. **vagary** (vā' gə rē) *n.* unpredictable action or behavior
Kristin's *vagaries* prevented her from holding a job as an air traffic controller.
syn: whim; caprice

7. **vacuous** (va' kyə wəs) *adj.* lacking intelligence
The student's *vacuous* expression revealed his failure to study for the test.
syn: empty-headed *ant: brilliant; shrewd*

8. **attrition** (ə tri' shən) *n.* a wearing down over time
The company faced a severe *attrition* of its stock price because of bad publicity.
syn: erosion *ant: buildup; accretion*

9. **archetype** (är' ki tīp) *n.* a prototype or original model
The *archetype* for the first airplane was only a toy model, but it has led to modern jets and supersonic fighter planes.
syn: model *ant: product*

10. **approbation** (a prə bā' shən) *n.* formal approval of an act
The president gave his *approbation* for the rescue of ten citizens who were being held hostage at a foreign embassy.
syn: authorization *ant: disapproval; opprobrium*

11. **burgeon** (bərˈjən) *v.* to grow, expand, or bloom
Increased colonization caused the island city to *burgeon*.
syn: *swell* *ant:* *shrink; diminish*
12. **commensurate** (kəˈmenʃərɪt) *adj.* an equal measure; corresponding in size and measurement
Though Margie and Liz attended different universities, they received *commensurate* educations.
syn: *equivalent; comparable* *ant:* *unequal*
13. **confluence** (kənˈflʊənts) *n.* a meeting or gathering together
The United Nations General Assembly is a *confluence* of world thought.
syn: *convergence; concourse* *ant:* *divergence*
14. **coup** (kʊp) *n.* a surprising, brilliant, and usually successful act
The rebels planned a *coup* to overthrow the current Prime Minister and install a new leader.
syn: *plot*
15. **secular** (seˈkjələr) *adj.* not spiritual or religious; worldly
Many religions warn of the dangers of the *secular* world because they believe it is full of sin.
syn: *earthly* *ant:* *religious*
